

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
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R 171745Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4862
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
USMISSION USBERLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL STUTTGART
AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
CINC EUR VAIHINGEN
USNMR SHAPE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 00894

NOFORN

E.O 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, GW, GE, BQG
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SUBJECT: FRG PROTEST AGAINST CLOSURE OF "SPIEGEL"
OFFICE

REFS: (A) BERLIN 238 NOTAL

(B) BERLIN 312 NOTAL AND PREVIOUS

1. AT THE JANUARY 13 BONN GROUP MEETING, FRG REP VON BRAUNMUEHL REPORTED ON STATE SECRETARY GAUS' JANUARY 10 PROTEST TO THE GDR ABOUT THE CLOSING OF THE EAST BERLIN OFFICE OF "DER SPIEGEL" (REF A). IN A THIRTY-MINUTE DISCUSSION AT THE GDR FOREIGN MINISTRY, GAUS TOLD KARL SEIDEL, HEAD OF THE FRG DEPARTMENT, THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FOUND IT REGRETTABLE THAT PRESS STORIES SHOULD STRAIN BILATERAL RELATIONS. GAUS SAID THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAD ALWAYS MADE IT CLEAR, AND ESPECIALLY IN RECENT DISCUSSIONS, THAT IT OPPOSED THE DISPARAGEMENT OF ANY HEAD OF STATE. IT HAD ALSO EXPLAINED THAT IT WAS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CONTENT OF THE "SPIEGEL" ARTICLES. IT THUS HAD TO PROTEST ALL THE MORE DECISIVELY AGAINST THE CLOSING OF THE "SPIEGEL" OFFICE. THIS MEASURE VIOLATED THE SPIRIT OF THE BASIC TREATY AS WELL AS THE CSCE FINAL ACT. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DEMANDED THAT THE GDR GUARANTEE JOURNALISTS THE OPPORTUNITIES TO PURSUE THEIR WORK WHICH CORRESPONDED TO THE AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE TWO GERMAN STATES AND TO THE CSCE FINAL ACT.

2. GAUS SAID THE FRG CONFIDENTLY EXPECTED THE GDR TO RETURN TO AN ATTITUDE WHICH WOULD FACILITATE THE CONTINUATION OF THE NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN
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THE TWO STATES. THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC CONTINUED TO BE PREPARED TO PURSUE SUCH A POLICY.

3. VON BRAUNMUEHL SAID SEIDEL REJECTED THE FRG PROTEST AS UNFOUNDED. SEIDEL CALLED THE EVENTS LEADING TO THE CLOSURE SO SERIOUS AS TO COMPLETELY JUSTIFY THE GDR ACTION. IT IN NO WAY VIOLATED THE BASIC TREATY OR THE CSCE FINAL ACT. THE GDR FOUND IT A SOURCE OF DISMAY AND REGRET THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT VIRTUALLY IDENTIFIED ITSELF WITH "DER SPIEGEL." THE GDR HAD NOT EXPECTED A PROTEST BUT AN EXPRESSION OF REGRET THAT THE HEAD OF A SOVEREIGN STATE HAD BEEN PUBLICLY DEFAMED. "DER SPIEGEL" HAD DEPRIVED ITSELF OF THE BASIS FOR ITS ACTIVITIES IN THE GDR.

4. SEIDEL ADDED THAT THE EARLY NOTIFICATION THAT THE NEW "SPIEGEL" CORRESPONDENT WOULD BE REFUSED ENTRY INTO THE GDR COULD VERY EASILY HAVE BEEN TAKEN AS A WARNING. IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT THERE HAD BEEN A REFUSAL TO ACCEPT IT AS SUCH. THE SIMPLE FACT WAS THAT THE AFFAIR CONSTITUTED AN AFFRONT TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE OF THE SOVEREIGN GDR. SEIDEL CON-

CLUDED THAT THE GDR WAS THOROUGHLY PREPARED TO CONTINUE
THE PROCESS OF NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS.
THIS, HOWEVER, ALSO DEPENDED UPON A CORRESPONDING
ATTITUDE ON THE PART OF THE FRG.
STOESSEL

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